

UPWARD INFLUENCE STRATEGIES: THE EFFECT OF CONSISTENCY AND
RECIPROCITY APPROACHES ON SUPERVISORY COMPLIANCE
AND PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

by

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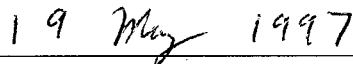
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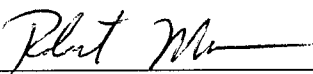
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Subordinates frequently employ specific tactics (upward influence strategies) in their attempts to obtain rewards or compliance from supervisors. In this research project, the effects on supervisory compliance and subordinates' performance evaluations of strategies based on consistency and reciprocity were examined. ROTC cadets, acting as supervisors, were exposed to written scenarios in which key subordinates solicited their compliance. After exposure to these influence attempts, participants evaluated the subordinates. Compliance was measured by supervisory agreement with the subordinate's recommendation. Results indicate that the use of consistency or reciprocity strategies, either in combination or alone, is significantly more effective in producing supervisory compliance than control conditions. No differences were found between the use of a

combination of consistency and reciprocity and the consistency approach used alone.

However, the combination of consistency and reciprocity was more effective in facilitating supervisory compliance than reciprocity used alone. Use of these tactics did not effect performance ratings.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Attempts to influence other people's attitudes and behaviors are prevalent throughout organizations. Influence attempts play a critical role in the attainment of personal and organizational goals. One of the most important determinants of managerial effectiveness is success in influencing subordinates, superiors, and peers (Ferris, Judge, Rowland & Fitzgibbons, 1994; Kipnis & Schmidt, 1988; Thacker & Wayne, 1995). Access to additional resources, higher benefits, and more information may depend solely on an employees' ability to influence their superiors, co-workers, and subordinates.

Many researchers have examined the role of influence in organizations; most have concentrated on a leader's ability to influence others. Less attention has been paid to the ways in which subordinates influence superiors. This is unfortunate, especially considering many experts contend that the "more people believe they can influence and control the organization, the greater the effectiveness of the organization" (Keys & Case, 1990, p.38). It would appear a key element in the success of any organization is providing subordinates the tools to actively initiate change and to affect decisions at all levels. The development of effective upward influence strategies are vital especially to subordinates who may have good ideas and pertinent knowledge but lack the proper authority to implement them (Cohen & Bradford, 1984).

The main goal of this paper was to identify effective methods for subordinates to influence their supervisors. Potential upward influence strategies were experimentally manipulated to determine which of these strategies were effective in gaining compliance from superiors. This study also examined the effect of these strategies on a personal job-related outcome, specifically performance ratings. The impact of these tactics on workplace outcomes was particularly important. Research has found that many strategies which are effective in the short-term can be detrimental to the employee in the long-run (Thacker & Wayne, 1995). Certainly, a strategy that facilitates compliant behavior but leads to poor performance ratings is not advisable. Therefore, before advocating any approach, researchers must consider its impact on individual workplace outcomes such as performance ratings or promotions.

Previous Research on Social Influence

Social psychologists have studied the role of influence in motivating human behavior extensively. Usually under the topic of persuasion, researchers have explored the process in which people are either directly or indirectly influenced by others. They have identified several factors, including the credibility of the agent, nature of the communication, and characteristics of the target, which contribute to the success of persuasive arguments (see Aronson, 1995, for a review). One of the most important determinants is the behavior of the influence seeker. Several studies have examined the ability of several influence agents--advertisers, sales personnel, politicians, the mass media-

-to change the attitudes or beliefs of others (see Aronson, 1995, for a review) and have found that success largely depends upon the influence strategy employed.

Several taxonomies have been developed to provide a classification system of compliance-gaining behavior. One of the first and most comprehensive was Marwell and Schmitt's (1967) list of 16 compliance-gaining techniques. Examples of these tactics include the use of threats (if you don't comply, I'll punish you), promises (if you comply, I'll reward you) and liking (I act friendly and helpful to get you in a good frame of mind so that you'll comply). These techniques were instrumental in explaining compliant behavior in marital relationships (Witteman & Fitzpatrick, 1986), interpersonal and non-interpersonal relationships (Miller, Boster, Rolof, & Seibold, 1977), and other interpersonal domains (Hirokawa, Kodama & Harper, 1991; Hirokawa, Mickery, & Miura, 1991). Several other classification schemes exist that classify compliance-gaining behavior within specific settings. For example, Kearney, Plax, Richmond and McCroskey's (1984) established 22 behavior alteration techniques used by teachers to affect student misconduct. In addition, Arch (1979) developed a five-category scheme for describing the influence strategies used by sales personnel (see, O'Keefe, 1991, for a review). However, Reardon (1991) contends that most of these classification schemes focus on the "availability of positive and negative sanctions for what can be categorized as either appropriate or consistent behavior" (p.118). She maintains that most techniques appeal to either the target's internal consistency or the target's need for approval and recommends condensing these techniques into broader categories which include exchange

and consistency. Cialdini (1993) contends that “although there are thousands of different tactics that compliance practitioners employ to produce yes, the majority will fall within six basic categories” (p.xiii). These categories include: consistency, reciprocation, social proof, authority, liking and scarcity (Cialdini, 1993) (see Table 1).

Table 1. Six Categories of Social Influence

Category	Definition
Consistency	Agent uses target's past behavior/attitude to induce target's compliance Agent ensures target that compliance will enable target to remain with prior behavior
Reciprocity	Agent offers rewards or benefits if target complies. Agent uses target's sense of obligation to induce compliance (quid pro quo)
Social Proof	Agent induces target's compliance by demonstrating that other people are complying (social validation)
Liking	Agent induces compliance with target by increasing the target's liking for the agent
Authority	Agent's use of authority induces target's compliance
Scarcity	Agent induces target's compliance by demonstrating that the target has no other choice

This study examined two of these strategies--consistency, reciprocity,--in an organizational setting.

Research on Consistency

Cialdini (1993) maintains that humans have a “nearly obsessive drive to be (and appear) consistent with what we have already done. Once we have made a choice or

taken a stand, we will encounter personal and interpersonal pressure to behave consistently with that commitment " (p.57). Early on, consistency-based theories played a key role in the understanding of behavior (Festinger, 1957; Newcomb, 1953; Zajonc, 1960). Research testing the theory of cognitive dissonance is replete with evidence that once people commit to a behavior or belief, they are more likely to subsequently behave in a manner that is constant with that previous commitment (Aronson & Mills, 1959; Freedom & Fraser, 1966; Knox & Inkster, 1968). For example, Deutsch and Gerard (1955) found that subjects who had made written or public commitments to a decision were more likely to remain consistent with their preliminary choices than subjects that did not commit themselves. These subjects refused to change their decision even in the face of contradictory evidence. Lord, Ross and Leper (1979) also found that subjects regarded information consistent with their beliefs as more credible than information that differed with their existing attitudes. The foot-in-the-door technique is a popular method of influence that relies on a person's need for consistency. Freedom and Fraser (1966) found that by getting someone to comply first with a small request, a person can later get that same individual to comply with a larger request. Another technique, low-balling, has also proven profitable for compliance professionals. Car dealers are experts at getting someone to commit to an initial purchase price and then later changing the price to a slightly higher one and still making the sale. Most car purchasers concede to this higher price because they have committed themselves to buying the car (Aronson, 1995). Schwartz (1970, as cited in Cialdini, 1993) found that over half of the college students

agreed to be on call as bone marrow donors after they had agreed to a series of previous commitments. Gonzales, Aronson and Costanzo (1988) found that energy auditors trained to induce commitment were more successful in canvassing customers to comply with energy conservation recommendations than auditors that were not trained. According to Gonzales et al. (1988), customers were motivated to keep their behavior (implementing energy saving tips) in line with earlier verbal commitments.

However, since the late 70's, only a few studies have attempted to explain behavior in terms of consistency motives (Aronson, 1992; Cialdini & DeNicholas, 1989). Howard (1990), for example, used a consistency approach to explain what he termed the "Foot in the Mouth" (FITM) effect. Howard found that people were more likely to comply with a donation request from a confederate if the confederate first asked how the potential donor was feeling and then, acknowledged that feeling. Those potential donors who responded "great" and whose feelings were recognized, were more likely to act "great" and make a charitable donation than potential donors that were not asked about their affective state. According to Howard, subjects were motivated to ensure their behavior remained consistent with their affective state. In a related study, Aune and Basil (1994) found further evidence to support a consistency theory of the FITM effect but also found evidence of a relational obligation approach. The authors contend that not only were subjects motivated to maintain consistency with their affective state, but they also felt an obligation to return the "favor" of the confederate's inquiry and recognition of the

subject's state. By asking how the subjects were feeling, confederates increased the relationship quality which in turn increased the obligation to comply (Aune & Basil, 1994).

One of the reasons researchers rarely invoke consistency-based explanations for behavior is that present day experiments have failed to replicate traditional consistency-based effects. According to Cialdini, Trost and Newsome (1995), this failure to replicate may be due to the fact that not all people have a dispositional preference for consistency. He examined individual differences between subjects in three standard consistency tactics: foot-in-the door, cognitive balance, and dissonance. He found that only those participants who rated high on his Preference for Consistency Scale (PFC) were motivated by consistency techniques. Other researchers contend that consistency strategies are only effective if targets are directly confronted with their inconsistent behavior. In a study on attitudes about safe sex and condom use, Stone, Aronson, Crain, Winslow, and Fried (1994) found that consistency tactics were only successful if undergraduates were directly confronted with the discrepancies between their attitudes toward safe sex and their previous behavior of not using a condom.

Research on Reciprocity

One of the most potent weapons of influence is reciprocity. Put simply, the rule of reciprocity "says that we should try to repay, in kind, what another person has provided us" (Cialdini 1993, p.17). Research has shown that this sense of indebtedness is "extremely pervasive across the human culture" (Cialdini, 1993, p.18). For example,

Cialdini, Green, and Rusch (1992) demonstrated in three different experiments that subjects were more likely to support an individual's persuasive argument if that same individual had shown similar support to the subject's earlier persuasive argument. In addition, during negotiations, studies have shown that people make concessions only when the other party returns those concessions (Axlerod, 1984; Cialdini, 1993). In prisoner dilemma games which require cooperation for completion, reciprocation has been a key to a subject's willingness to collaborate with other subjects. Specifically, Braver (1975) found that the amount of reward given to an opponent depended upon the opponent's previous level of reward to the subject. Subjects tended to reciprocate behavior, either reward or withholding, during the game. Moreover, the reciprocated behavior does not have to match exactly with the original favor or gift. For example, if an agent gives a target money, the target can fulfill their sense of obligation with something besides money as long as the repayment is valued by the agent. Indeed, Regan (1971) found that subjects bought twice as many raffles tickets from a confederate if the confederate had given the subject a coke than if the confederate had not given him a coke. Interestingly enough, Regan's subjects felt a sense of obligation to repay the confederate even though they had not asked for the coke. The Hare Krishna Society has perfected this method of influence while soliciting donations. Before asking for a contribution, they will give an unsuspecting passerby a gift such as a flower or a book which usually results in the passerby returning the "favor" with a donation. Other research has found that a "person's perceptions of another's positive regard can produce reciprocal feelings" (Howard & Gengler, 1995,

p.124) which translate into increased compliance (Bercheid & Walser, 1978; Cialdini, 1993). Howard and Gengler (1995) maintain that remembering a target's name can induce reciprocal obligations on the part of that target. In their study, subjects were more likely to comply with a confederate's request (completing a questionnaire) if that confederate, posing as a professor, remembered the subject's name. According to Howard and Gengler (1995), subjects "were motivated to reciprocate the compliment implied by the act of remembrance of names" (p.127). In summary, research supports Cialdini's (1993) contention that "by first doing us a favor, strange, disliked, or unwelcome others can enhance the chance that we will comply with one of their requests" (p.30).

Research on the Multiple Use of Influence Tactics

In natural settings, influence strategies are not mutually exclusive or independently implemented, yet little research has been done investigating tactical combinations of compliance-gaining tactics. In one of the few experiments, Howard (1995) compared a combination of reciprocity and consistency approaches to a separate use of each strategy. Howard's experiment required confederates to use one of three compliance-gaining approaches (reciprocity and consistency, or reciprocity alone, or consistency alone) during telephone solicitations to induce subjects to donate to a local food bank. They found that combining these techniques resulted in more compliance than the use of either single approach alone.

Research on the Use of Consistency and Reciprocity in Organizations

Persuasion research has provided a useful taxonomy of successful tactics in compliance-gaining situations. In particular, consistency and reciprocity have proved extremely effective in facilitating compliant behavior. Based on these findings, one might predict that these tactics would be successful in other environments such as organizations. Although this prediction seems plausible, research on consistency and reciprocity approaches in organizations is limited. Researchers have hypothesized about the potential of these tactics to affect change in organizations. For example, Wortman and Linsenmeier (1977) contend compliance-gaining tactics centered on ingratiation (i.e. friendly or complimentary actions towards a boss) are successful because the recipient of such behavior feels pressure to reciprocate and keep the relationship in balance. An exchange theory of employer-employee interaction has been a common view for several years in organizational literature. The Exchange Model maintains that organizations provide incentives for employees to increase productivity. They exchange money and social outlets for work (Reardon, 1991). In terms of dyadic interactions (i.e. subordinate-supervisor), Cohen and Bradford (1989) contend that the "way influence is acquired without formal authority is through the law or reciprocity" (p.7) in which influence agents offer critical currencies such as assistance (working overtime), resources (lending personnel/equipment) or enhanced reputation (employees' respect/approval) in exchange for compliance. However, these theories lack empirical evaluation.

There are two problems with generalizing from this research. First, the relationships examined in traditional persuasion studies are quite different from those encountered in the workplace. Research on persuasion has have primarily examined these strategies under situations in which the influence agent is a compliance professional or peer and the target of influence is a consumer or a fellow undergraduate. In these settings, individual characteristics such as power, authority and status are relatively equal. Influence seekers and targets are usually unfamiliar and relatively independent. However in an organizational context, power and authority are distributed throughout the organization. In traditional hierarchies, for example, there are distinct lines of authority and strict procedures for soliciting compliance. Employees are extremely familiar and are dependent upon each other to accomplish the mission. Subordinates, in particular, rely on their supervisor to accomplish both personal (pay raise, time-off, high ratings) and organizational goals (support on a project, approval on a proposal). In these settings, subordinates have much more to lose if a particular strategy fails.

Second, persuasion literature has failed to investigate the long-term effects of these strategies. Clearly, telemarketers and car salesman are only concerned with short-term compliance on part of the consumer. But subordinates are concerned about the impact their behavior has on many different variables besides compliance. Strategies that influence supervisors in the short-term but have a detrimental effect in the long-term are not likely to be employed.

Possibly because of these differences, organizational researchers have studied influence behavior with little reference to the social psychology literature on influence. They have studied strategies that appear distinct from those researched in social psychology.

Research on Influence Tactics in Organizations

The primary focus of research on influence tactics in organizations has been: (a) to develop useful taxonomies of influence behavior, (b) to identify under what conditions these factors are likely to be employed, and (c) to examine the relative effectiveness of these strategies. Organizational research has utilized primarily one typology, the Kipnis and Schmidt's Profiles of Influence Strategies (POIS), to study influence behavior. This typology includes strategies that differ from those identified in traditional persuasion research. In addition, organizational research has investigated the effect of these strategies not only on immediate outcomes such as compliance but also on long-term outcomes such as salary increases and promotions.

Common Influence Tactics

Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson (1980) compiled a list of common influence strategies used in organizations. In their study, 165 lower-level managers wrote descriptions of situations in which they influenced their boss, subordinate or co-worker, specifically answering the question "How I get my way." Based on a factor analysis of

their responses, eight dimensions of influence were identified: assertiveness, ingratiation, rationality, sanctions, exchange, upward appeals, blocking and coalitions. This research led to the construction of the Profiles of Organizational Influence Strategies (POIS), a commercial inventory which includes seven tactics: assertiveness, friendliness (ingratiation), reason (rationality), bargaining (exchange), sanctions, higher authority, and coalition. Other researchers have validated the basic dimensionality of these subscales (Schriesheim & Hinkin, 1990; Yukl & Falbe, 1990). Research has shown that only six of these strategies are used by subordinates (Kipnis & Schmidt, 1982) (see Table 2). Later Kipnis and Schmidt (1985) condensed these dimensions into three main categories: (a) hard tactics, involving assertive requests for compliance; (b) soft tactics, involving the use of ingratiation and friendliness; and (c) rational tactics, involving the use of logic and exchange strategies. Kipnis and Schmidt's two classification systems remain the most widely used methods of studying influence in organizations, regardless of direction (upward, downward, or lateral).

Determinants of Tactical Choice

Kipnis et al. (1980) also concluded that not all upward influence strategies are used with equal frequency. Indeed, research has found that reason and ingratiation are more frequently employed by subordinates than the other influence tactics (Ansari & Kapoor, 1985; Deluga, 1988; Keys & Case, 1990; Hinkin & Schriesheim, 1990; Schilit & Locke, 1982; Yukl & Tracey, 1992). These findings have driven researchers to determine

the factors associated with strategy implementation. The choice of a particular tactic depends on several factors including the characteristics of the influence agent (Mowday, 1978, 1979) and target persons (Deluga, 1988), the goals of the influence attempt (Ansari & Kapoor, 1985; Kipnis et al, 1980; Rao et al, 1995), the influence situation (Mulder, 1987), and the organizational climate (Erez & Rim, 1982).

Table 2. Common Upward Influence Strategies Used in Organizations

Strategy	Definition
Assertive/ Pressure Tactics	Agent uses demands, threats, or intimidation to convince the target to comply
Higher Authority/ Upward Appeals	Agents uses appeals to higher management for assistance in gaining target's compliance
Exchange Tactics	Agent makes an explicit or implicit promise that the target will receive rewards or benefits if the target complies
Coalition	Agent seeks the aid of other to persuade target to comply
Ingratiation/ Friendliness	Agent attempts to get the target in a good mood or to think favorably of the agent before the agent makes the request
Rationality/ Reason	Agent uses logical arguments and factual evidence to persuade the target to comply

Hirokawa, Mickery and Miura (1991) examined the association between an agent's request legitimacy and choice of tactics. Request legitimacy is a "manager's legal standing or prerogative in a compliance-gaining situation as bestowed by the formal policies of the organization" (Hirokawa et al., 1991, p.427). Hirokawa et al. (1991) exposed 169 managers and supervisors to hypothetical compliance-gaining situations in which high and low legitimacy was manipulated. Participants were asked which tactics

they would use in each situation. High legitimacy was associated with hard or assertive tactics whereas low legitimacy was related to soft, ingratiating methods.

Other results have shown that higher authority is more often used to influence a task-centered superior (Deluga, 1988) or an authoritarian manager (Ansari & Kapoor, 1987) than a person centered superior or a participative manager. In addition, higher authority is more likely used to achieve an organizational goal (requesting new work procedures) than a personal goal (Ansari & Kapoor, 1987). Rational persuasion is also more likely to be used to achieve a organizational goal but it is more likely employed on a participative manager than an authoritarian leader (Ansari & Kapoor, 1987). Exchange and ingratiation are also employed on authoritarian managers or task-centered superiors (Ansari & Kapoor, 1987; Deluga, 1988) but these strategies are used more often to achieve a personal goal (requesting time off). In sum, the choice of a particular may depend upon the interactions among factors.

Effect of Influence Strategies on Compliance

Unfortunately, organizational research has largely overlooked one of the most important determinants of tactical choice: the relative effectiveness of a particular tactic. Researchers have assumed that not all strategies are equally potent yet only a few studies have compared strategies. Indeed, Thacker and Wayne (1995) contend that even though "articles on influence tactics have either explicitly or implicitly suggested that some influence tactics may be more effective than others, few studies have actually examined

this major contention”(p.740). Moreover, the limited research in this areas has relied solely on self-report methods of assessment. In terms of effectiveness, most studies have used a correlational design in which effectiveness was measured by a job-related criterion such as ratings of performance (Yukl & Tracey, 1992). Other studies have used a critical-incident design in which effectiveness was based on self-report measures of successful and unsuccessful attempts. In these cases, subjects described an influence attempt and annotated whether it was successful or unsuccessful (Schilit & Locke, 1982).

Descriptions are then coded into tactics and matched against the dichotomous outcome.

Since this study investigated the effect of influence strategies on compliance, this section reviewed only those studies that measured effectiveness in terms of an immediate outcome, specifically compliance. Due to the fact that higher authority and coalition are rarely used by subordinates (Kipnis & Schmidt, 1980), results are limited to the four most common methods of upward influence: Assertiveness, Ingratiation, Rationality, and Exchange.

Schilit and Locke (1982) interviewed both subordinates and supervisors to obtain descriptions on successful and unsuccessful upward influence attempts. Participants were asked to describe an influence attempt and then annotate whether it was successful or unsuccessful. Descriptions were coded into influence categories. Frequency rates of these categories were compared for successful and unsuccessful attempts. They found that exchange strategies (trading job-related benefits) and rational approaches (logically presenting ideas) were more likely to facilitate success than other strategies. On the other

hand, assertive tactics (threatening to go over the target's head or demanding) were more often associated with unsuccessful attempts. Although one can assume success was synonymous with target compliance, the researchers never really defined success to participants.

In an effort to more precisely define effectiveness, Falbe and Yukl (1992) evaluated the effect of upward influence strategies on three immediate outcomes: commitment, compliance and resistance. According to the authors, commitment and compliance are similar but with commitment the target person "is likely to exercise initiative and demonstrate unusual effort and persistence in order to carry out the request successfully"(p.639). Researchers had supervisors describe subordinate influence attempts and evaluate those attempts in terms of commitment, compliance, and resistance. Descriptions were then coded into strategies and matched with the outcomes. They found that exchange was the most successful tactic, resulting in compliance or commitment 76 percent of the time. Ingratiation and rational persuasion were moderately effective, resulting in commitment or compliance over 53 percent of the time. And as expected, assertive tactics produced the most resistance (over 56 percent of the time).

Yukl and Tracey (1992) also evaluated effectiveness in terms of task commitment. Using a questionnaire format, they asked supervisors to identify how often their subordinates used nine different influence tactics. Supervisors were also asked how often these tactics resulted in their commitment for the task. They examined the association strategy and task commitment. They found that rational persuasion, ingratiation and

exchange were positively correlated with task commitment ($r = .43$, $r = .31$, and $r = .25$, respectively). Assertive or pressure tactics were negatively related to task commitment ($r = -.12$).

Although these studies provide initial evidence for the effect of upward influence tactics on immediate outcomes, they are not without their limitations. First, Schilit and Locke (1982) failed to properly define success for their participants. Some participants may not have considered compliance as the obvious outcome of a successful attempt. Moreover, all three studies rely on self-report measures which increases the potential for social desirability bias' and other systematic judgment errors. The correlational nature of these studies leaves the conclusions susceptible to confounding effects. In particular, an influence strategy may be confounded with individual differences. The fact that a strategy is successful may have more to do with the individual characteristics of the agent rather than the strategy itself. In addition, the retrospective nature of the participants' descriptions are particularly susceptible to memory distortions.

Effect of Influence Strategies on Individual Job-Related Outcomes

To determine the effect of upward influence strategies on job-related outcomes such as performance rating or promotions, most studies have used surveys such as the Profiles of Organizational Influence Strategies (POIS) inventory to identify subordinates' preferred strategies. Use of these strategies is then compared against individual job-related outcomes such as performance ratings, salary and job level. Thus far, sufficient

evidence on the consequences of using upward influence strategies only exist for the four most common methods: Assertiveness, Ingratiation, Rational Persuasion, and Exchange.

Assertiveness

Research in this area has shown a negative association between assertiveness and personal job-related outcomes such as performance ratings, salaries (Kipnis & Schmidt, 1988; Rao et al. 1995), and promotions (Thacker & Wayne, 1995). However, Dreher, Dougherty, and Whitely (1988, as cited in Ferris & Judge, 1991) found no relationship between assertiveness and salary.

Ingratiation

Ingratiation is positively associated with performance ratings (Kipnis & Vanderverr, 1971; Ferris, Judge, Rowland & Fitzgibbons, 1991; Wayne & Ferris, 1990). For example, in a face-to-face interaction, participants role playing in a laboratory who used impression management techniques received higher performance ratings than participants who did not use these approaches (Wayne & Kacmar, 1991). Judge and Bertz (1994) also found that ingratiation strategies led to higher levels of extrinsic career success, as measured by salary, job level, and number of promotions. In addition, Schmidt and Swaffen-Smith (1992) surveyed 69 managers and found that subordinates who utilized ingratiation tactics were rated 15 percent higher on performance appraisals. However, in a more recent study that surveyed employees and supervisors from a major

university, Thacker and Wayne (1995) found a negative relationship between ingratiation and promotability.

Rationality/Reason

The use of a rational approach appears to have a positive impact on an individual's career. Several studies have found reason to be positively associated with personal job-related outcomes such as ratings, salaries (Dreher, Dougherty, & Whitley, as cited in Ferris & Judge, 1991; Kipnis & Schmidt, 1988), and assessments of promotability (Thacker & Wayne, 1995).

Exchange

The limited research on the effect of this strategy on job-related outcomes is inconsistent. Studies have found that exchange tactics are negatively associated with performance ratings (Kipnis & Schmidt, 1988) yet positively associated with salaries (Dreher, Dougherty & Whitley, 1988, as cited in Ferris & Judge, 1991).

Organizational Research Summary

In summary, organizational research have developed a useful taxonomy of specific tactics and shown that ingratiation and reason are the most common methods of influence among subordinates. Research has shown that choice of a particular tactic depends on several factors. Two of the most important factors are the effect of these strategies on

supervisory compliance and individual job-related outcomes. In terms of effectiveness, studies indicate that rational persuasion is significantly more effective than other strategies while assertiveness is relatively ineffective or even harmful. However, results on other strategies are limited (ingratiation) and inconsistent (exchange). In terms of impact, studies indicate that assertive behavior on the part of the subordinate is related to negative job-related outcomes such as lower performance ratings and salaries. Rational persuasion, on the other hand, has shown to be positively associated with job-related outcomes such as performance ratings, promotions, and pay raises. Ingratiation appears to positively related to higher ratings and pay raises but there is also evidence that extreme ingratiating attempts may produce negative consequences, falling prey to the “too much of a good thing” syndrome (Baron, 1986).

Drawbacks of Current Organizational Research

The major limitation of current research on upward influence is the reliance on self-report measures (surveys, tactic inventories, incident descriptions) which increases the potential for social desirability bias' and other systematic judgment errors. Research has shown that on sensitive topics, people tend to respond in ways that maintain a socially positive self-image (Yukl, Kim, & Falbe, 1996) which may or may not be accurate. In addition, the retrospective nature of most self-reports creates potential for error. Subjects' descriptions of influence events may be particularly susceptible to “gap filling”, rendering recall of influence events inaccurate and distorted.

A second limitation is the correlational nature of most studies. Correlational designs are particularly susceptible to confounding effects. In these cases, the influence strategy may be confounded with individual differences and/or the presence of situational factors. The fact that use of a particular strategy had no effect on performance ratings may have little to do with the choice of strategy and more to do with the personality of the agent. This is especially true with studies that measure the effectiveness of strategies in terms of broad, non-immediate outcomes such as performance ratings. The use of delayed outcomes as a measure of effectiveness increases the potential for confounding variables. For example, if effectiveness is measured by performance ratings, other factors such as age, time in the company or recent performance, could all contribute more than influence behavior. Researchers cannot tie influence behavior directly to the final outcome.

A third limitation is that most studies have only examined the use of single tactics in an isolated setting. Realistically, subordinate influence attempts most likely involve a manipulation of more than one tactic yet few studies have investigated combinations. Indeed, Barry and Shapiro (1992) contend that the "notion that compliance-gaining follows from the management of tactical combinations remains largely unexplored" (p.1429).

A fourth limitation is that none of the methods--incident descriptions or questionnaires-- have investigated the potential of these tactics to be successful in the face of competing arguments. Frequently, supervisors are exposed to recommendations from several sources before rendering a decision and/or have competing requests for the same

resources. Upward influence tactics that can facilitate compliance in these situations would be particularly useful to subordinates.

Probably the greatest concern with this type of research is the lack of controls. Few studies have manipulated influence tactics in a controlled environment. Without control conditions, it is impossible to properly weigh the effectiveness of the influence tactics. If, for example, effectiveness is measured by compliance, there remains the possibility that compliance would have been achieved without the use of a tactic. Indeed, Martin (1987) found that influence attempts were not significantly better in obtaining pay raises than no action. Lack of control conditions also leaves open the possibility of alternate explanations for the success or failure of a particular strategy. It is possible that an influence strategy is only successful because the target is responding "mindlessly" to an expected request 'schema' which involves a request and a reason/tactic (Langer, Blank & Chanowitz, 1978). As long as the elements of the expected schema are present, the target will comply with the request.

Langer et al. (1978) first coined the term 'mindlessness' to describe this seemingly rigid cognitive processing that relies on past information and ignores the presence of on-going information. According to Langer et al. (1985), "when the structure of communication is congruent with one's past experiences, it may occasion behavior mindless of relevant details. When a person mindlessly takes in information, the person, for example, hears what is said but does not work on that information" (p.606). Instead, a prior script, defined as "a cognitive structure that specifies a typical sequence of

occurrences in a given situation", (Ashforth & Fried, 1988), is used to process the information. Langer et al. (1978) found support for this 'mindless' compliant behavior in a field study which required confederates to approach subjects at a copier machine and ask to use it first. The request was varied across three conditions. In one condition, confederates made a request only (May I use the Xerox machine?). In a second condition, confederate made a request with a reason (May I use the Xerox machine because I'm in a rush). And in the third, mindless condition, confederates made a request with a nonsense reason (May I use the Xerox machine because I have to make copies). For a small (5 copies) request, they found that compliance was greatest in both the reason and nonsense reason condition, supporting the fact that at least for trivial requests, targets are guided by automatic, script-like knowledge. In two other studies using a written paradigm, Langer et al. (1978) found that when the script was congruent with previous experience, 55% physicians and 90% secretaries surveyed, complied with the meaningless communication making with subordinates. Experts contend the potential for mindless decision making exists in organizations as well. Ashforth and Fried (1988) contend that in organizations much of the "behavioral and cognitive activity occurs automatically or mindlessly with little or no real problem solving or conscious awareness" (p. 306).

Finally, organizational research on upward influence strategies has largely ignored studies from other disciplines that have examined influence strategies under control conditions. The persuasion literature provides examples of influence strategies that have

been effective in gaining compliance yet these have not been tested in an organizational setting.

Rationale for Thesis

These limitations highlight the need for studies that experimentally manipulate influence behavior, proven successful in other domains, in an organizational setting. In addition, effectiveness should be measured by immediate outcomes, such as compliance or task commitment, which are less susceptible to intervening variables than non-immediate criterion. Moreover, research needs to investigate the effectiveness and impact of tactical combinations, which are more likely to be used in a natural setting.

The goal of this thesis was to build upon previous research on upward influence strategies by experimentally manipulating influence behavior in a controlled environment. Although research has shown that both reciprocity and consistency are successful methods for producing consumer compliance, little attention has been paid to the potential of these tactics to induce supervisory compliance. Hence, this paper investigated the effectiveness of these two strategies to produce compliance in supervisors. To determine effectiveness, rates of compliance were compared against control conditions. One of these controls included a mindless condition, yielding the opportunity to examine a potential alternate explanation for successful strategies. In addition, compliance-gaining situations included a request from an outside source, rendering the opportunity to examine the effect of competition on these tactics. Since the impact of these strategies on personal job-related

outcomes is also a concern, this study also addressed the effect of these tactics on performance ratings.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Participants

One hundred and nineteen ROTC cadets from three universities in the Pacific Northwest participated in this study. Due to the use of Air Force terminology and the requirement for some knowledge of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, participation was limited to Junior and Senior cadets. Junior and Senior cadets were also selected based on the assumption that these cadets would soon hold supervisory positions in the active duty Air Force. The participants (37 females, 82 males) had a mean age of 21, and had been involved in ROTC for an average of 3.2 years. Only 10 cadets had previous military experience (prior enlistment) besides their current ROTC program. One hundred and fifteen had completed ROTC Field Training, a 3-week leadership course.

Procedure

Participants were exposed to influence attempts through the use of written incidents, a method that has proved successful in other studies of influence (Barry & Shapiro, 1992; Harper & Hirokawa, 1988). Each participant read a packet. The packet was divided into three main sections: (a) An introductory section which outlined the participant's role as a supervisor, specifically squadron commander (see Appendix A); (b)

a 'meeting' section which included five separate conversations with each of the squadron's five key subordinates. These conversations focused on specific personnel and organizational problems. In this section, participants also rendered decisions regarding these problems using a multiple choice format (see Appendix B); and (c) an evaluation section in which the participant/commander evaluated each of the five key subordinates (see Appendix C).

Each participant was exposed to five influence conditions: consistency; reciprocity; consistency + reciprocity; mindless-influence; and no-influence. Each condition included a recommendation ("I think A1C Smith should get an Article 15") and an influence strategy ("because this is what we have done in the past"). The control condition contained *only* a recommendation. The order of the conditions was counterbalanced across participants.

Materials

The written packet began with a short introduction which outlined the following: (a) the participant's role as a commander, (b) background information on the squadron's mission and organizational structure, and (c) information on upcoming meetings with the squadron's five major division chiefs (flight commanders). The introductory section also contained a letter from the participant/commander's supervisor, the Wing Commander. This letter was designed to encourage the participants to think independently and prevent participants from blindly following recommendations. The Wing Commander's letter also included an attachment which provided participants with additional information on

squadron commanders' options regarding disciplinary action. Introductory information was identical for all participants.

Next, after reading a brief summary about a flight, the participants/commanders 'met' with each flight commander separately. In these meetings, participants were exposed to five hypothetical compliance-gaining situations. The specifics of each situation were held constant. However, the order in which each participant was exposed to each situation varied. The influence condition associated with each situation also varied.

The 'meeting' was operationalized as a written conversation. The conversation was divided into six main stages. After initial greetings, the flight commander presented the commander with a personnel problem (e.g., "A1C Hillcrest arrived to work late with alcohol on her breath"). Second, the flight commander informed the commander about the military justice recommendation for that problem (e.g., "For Hillcrest, legal recommends an Article 15 and Involuntary Separation Action"). Third, the flight commander informed the commander about the subordinate in question's duty performance (e.g., "Hillcrest has been a pretty good performer"). Fourth, the flight commander recommended a solution (e.g., "I suggest we give Hillcrest a suspended bust and an Article 15"). Fifth, the flight commander used an influence tactic to induce compliance with the request (e.g., "This action is appropriate because this is what we have done in the past in similar situations"). And finally, the flight commander discussed an operational problem but did not offer a recommendation or utilize an influence tactic.

All descriptive information during each conversation was similar except for the influence portion which had five different variations. The consistency + reciprocity

condition included a combination of consistency and reciprocity approaches (e.g., “because this is what we have done in the past” and . . . “if you give Hillcrest a break, the flight will work really hard for the upcoming inspection”). The consistency or reciprocity condition included a consistency or a reciprocity approach (“because this is what we have done in the past” or “if you give Hillcrest a chance, the flight will work really hard for the upcoming inspection”). The mindless-influence condition included a ‘mindless’ approach (“because I’ve seen him work in the squadron”). Finally, the no-influence or control condition included a simple request without any additional influence tactic.

After reading each conversation, the participant was asked to render a decision on both the personnel and operational problem using a multiple choice format. For the personnel problem, the options included both the military justice and flight commander’s recommendation and other feasible solutions to the problem.

The above sequence was repeated five times until the squadron commander ‘met’ with all five flight commanders. Although each meeting contained different problems, different recommendations, and different solutions, the communication style was similar.

After reading all five conversations, the commander/participant evaluated each of the five flight commanders. The participant also gave written reasons for assigned ratings. The evaluation section was identical for each participant.

Military Justice Recommendation

The military justice recommendation was included to increase realism. Air Force regulations require commanders to seek advice on discipline and punishment from the base

military justice center. Military justice is the Air Force's advising agency on issues/problems regarding administrative sanctions and punishment. It has also been included to prevent participants/commanders from blindly following the advise of the key subordinate. Moreover, this recommendation served as a competing source of influence. Realistically, subordinates compete with other organizational members for a supervisors' compliance. In this case, the "other" member had considerable credibility and expertise. Yet, the subordinate's recommendation opposed that of the judge advocate. In each case, the military justice recommendation was more severe than the subordinates.

The Operational Problem

The operational problem has been included to lengthen the participant's interaction with the subordinate. It acted as "filler" information and provided the participants with more interaction time from which to evaluate subordinates.

Measures

Compliance

If the decision rendered by the participant/supervisor was the same as the one the subordinate recommended, then compliance occurred (multiple choice options included the recommendation made by the subordinate). If participant did not agree with the subordinate and selected another option, then the participant's response was coded as noncompliance.

Performance Ratings

The participant/supervisor rated subordinates on the following six dimensions of job performance: duty performance, leadership, managerial skills, judgment, communication skills, and potential for promotion. Descriptions were provided for each level of performance using a 7 point scale with anchors (1 = poor, 4 = average, 7= outstanding)

Besides exposure to the flight commander during the simulated conversations, each participant read descriptions of the flight commander's previous performance. These descriptions depicted each flight commander as an average performer. Each description included two positive (e.g., "he saved the wing over \$20,000") and two negative comments (e.g., "her proposal was rejected by higher headquarters") regarding previous performance. Based on previous performance alone (without influence attempt information), these commanders would most likely receive average ratings.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Manipulation Checks

The manipulation checks used indicated that the situations were perceived as intended. Fifteen judges, Air Force Senior Enlisted personnel from a nearby Air Force Base, rated all five scenarios as “indicative of typical Air Force personnel problems.” In addition, they considered all recommendations “as appropriate options” that were “within the commander’s authority per the Uniform Code of Military Justice”. Judges also reviewed each flight commander’s performance descriptions and rated them using a 7 point scale where “1” = poor performance and “7” = outstanding performance. Judge’s mean responses did not differ from participant responses (all $ps < .01$).

Disciplinary options were listed in a descending order from the most severe to least severe. The Judge Advocate recommendations were always listed as the most severe. To ensure that participants perceived this order as intended, three severity questions were included at the end of each scenarios, asking participants to rate the severity of the recommendations on a 1 to 9 scale (1= not very severe, 9 = very severe). Participants consistently rated the Judge Advocate recommendation ($M = 7.75$) as more severe than the Flight Commander’s recommendation ($M = 5.18$)

Participants also rated 'how certain' they were of their decision on a 9 point scale (1 = not very certain, 9 = very certain). There is some evidence to suggest that in ambiguous or uncertain situations, influence attempts are more successful. However, certainty levels across scenarios were relatively high ($M = 7.38$). In addition, certainty levels did not differ across scenarios, $F(4,472) = .328$, $p = .849$.

Major Findings

This study attempted to answer two major questions: (a) What are the effects of two influence strategies --consistency and reciprocity-- on supervisory compliance?; and (b) how does the use of these strategies effect performance ratings? The first question can be answered by comparing rates of compliance when strategies are used to rates of compliance when controls are utilized. In this study, compliance was measured by whether or not the supervisor agreed with the subordinate's recommendation. Therefore, agreement in the experimental/strategy condition was compared against agreement in control conditions. First, results are reported comparing agreement across scenarios. Next, comparisons are made between scenarios to determine whether agreement/compliance with a particular strategy depended upon the scenario.

The second question can be determined by comparing mean performance ratings in the strategy condition to mean ratings in control conditions. Comparisons were also made between the specific strategies. Again, results are reported across scenarios and between scenarios.

The Effect of Strategies on Supervisory Compliance

To investigate the effect of upward influence strategies, rates of compliance were compared. Significant differences between influence strategies were observed $F(4,472) = 17.041, p < .001$. Use of an influence strategy was more effective in producing compliance than a mindless approach or a simple request $F(1,118) = 60.116, p < .001$. The mindless and control conditions did not differ $F(1,118) = 1.898, p = .171$.

Contrary to expectations, the combination approach did not produce the most compliance (See Figure 1). Although the combination approach was slightly more effective than reciprocity in facilitating agreement, $F(1,118) = 3.907, p < .05$, this approach did not differ from consistency, $F(1,118) = .362, p = .549$. Consistency was more effective than reciprocity, $F(1,118) = 7.788, p < .006$.

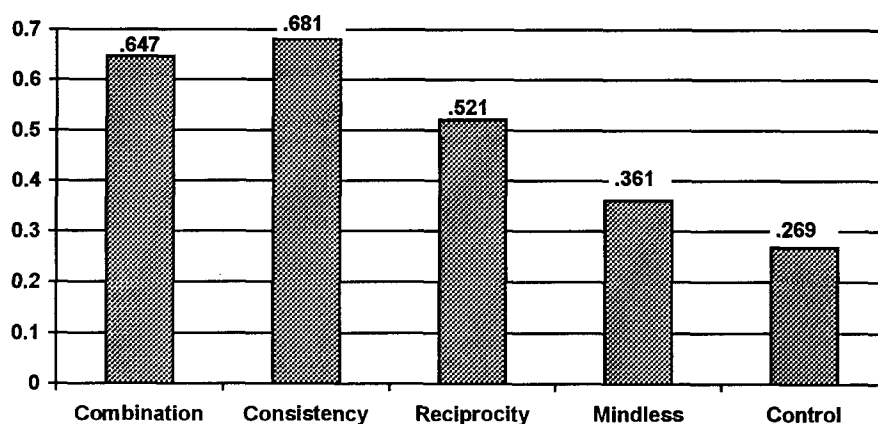


FIGURE 1. Proportion Agreement by Strategy (n = 119). Use of a strategy (combination, consistency or reciprocity) resulted in significantly more agreement than control conditions (mindless or control).

A more sensitive measure of compliance can be obtained by taking a participant's certainty about his or her decision into account. By multiplying participant's certainty ratings by whether they agreed or disagreed with the subordinate's recommendation (coded as -1 for disagree, and 1 for agree), a choice certainty scale was obtained with potential range from -9 = certainly disagree to +9 = certainly agree (see Table 3).

Table 3. Participants' Choice Certainty

Strategy	Choice Certainty	
	<u>M</u>	SD
Combination	2.07	7.22
Consistency	2.45	7.2
Reciprocity	0.08	7.49
Mindless	-1.96	7.06
Control	-3.42	6.86

This scale provides an indication of the strength of compliance. If participants strongly agreed with a particular strategy, then mean responses should be positive; if participants strongly disagreed with an approach, means should be negative. Again, differences in mean responses should reflect differences in participant's reaction to a particular approach. Consistent with proportion agreement findings, use of any influence strategy resulted in stronger agreement than a mindless approach or a simple request, $F(1,118) = 39.413$, $p < .001$. Both the combination approach and consistency were more effective than reciprocity, $F(1,118) = 7.256$, $p < .008$. No differences were found between mindless

and control conditions $F(1,118) = 3.077, p = .08$ or between the combination approach and consistency $F(1,118) = .209, p = .65$.

Figure 2 displays participant agreement with a particular strategy by scenarios. In general, use of any strategy facilitates compliance (agreement) and is not affected by the scenario. This pattern follows for every scenario except Scenario 1, $F(1,118) = 10.531, p < .001$. Scenario 1 shows very little compliance no matter what influence strategy was used. Only with the combination strategy was compliance increased to levels consistent with the other scenarios, $F(4,114) = 1.859, p = .123$. Compliance under the control condition was also consistent with the other scenarios, $F(4,114) = .835, p = .506$.

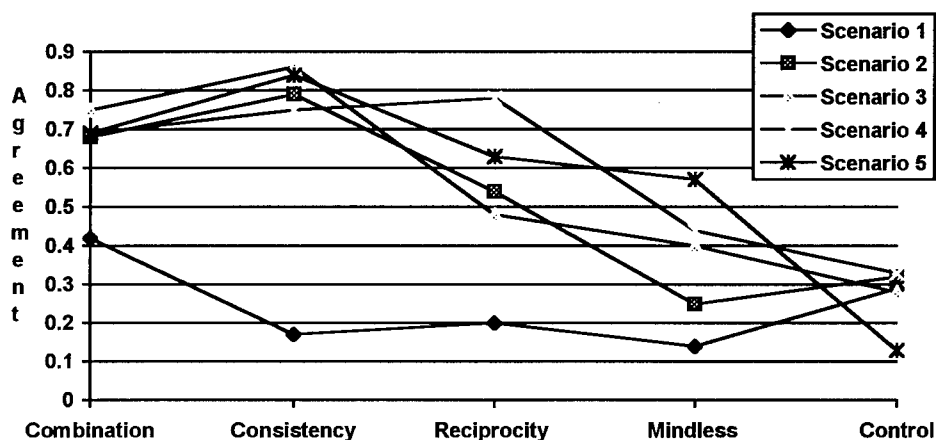


FIGURE 2. Participant Agreement by Scenario.

Effect of Strategies on Performance Ratings

A second goal of this study was to determine the effect of influence strategies on performance ratings. Each supervisor (subject) rated five key subordinates on six performance items using a 7-point Likert-type scale, where “1” meant “Poor

Performance”, “4” meant “Average Performance”, and “7” meant “Outstanding Performance”. Performance items included: Duty Performance; Leadership; Managerial Skills; Communication Skills; Judgment; and Potential for Promotion. Mean responses on these items for each strategy are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Mean Ratings by Strategy

Strategy	Ratings					
	Duty		Managerial	Comm	Promotion	
	Performance	Leadership	Skills	Skills	Judgment	Potential
Combination	5.29	5.1	4.99	5.22	4.91	5.19
Consistency	5.14	5.15	4.97	5.18	4.99	5.19
Reciprocity	5.09	4.94	4.83	5.35	4.84	5.18
Mindless	5.01	4.94	4.83	5.34	4.84	5.18
Control	5.24	5.17	4.94	5.21	4.9	5.18

Use of a particular strategy did not effect specific performance ratings with exception of ratings on communication skills. Here, there were slight differences between use of a combination approach and the mindless condition $F(1,118) = 4.922$, $p < .028$, and between the use of reciprocity and the mindless condition $F(1,118) = 11.272$, $p < .001$. In both these case, ratings were higher for the strategy condition than the mindless condition ($M_s = 5.13, 5.35$ vs. 4.99).

Effect of Agreement on Performance

Although use of a particular strategy seems to have little effect on performance ratings (aside from communication), supervisory agreement itself may impact ratings.

Table 4 lists mean performance ratings for each strategy broken down by whether the participant agreed or disagreed. In general, agreement was associated with higher mean ratings. This pattern followed in all cases except the control condition. Significant differences were found for the consistency condition. Specifically, when a consistency approach was used, participant agreement resulted in significantly higher ratings for subordinates on all performance items, $\lambda = .877$, $F(6,112) = 2.62$, $p < .02$. Agreement with the use of other strategies (combination or reciprocity) resulted in higher ratings on several individual performance items (see Table 4).

Table 4. Mean Ratings by Strategy with and Without Participant Agreement

Ratings							
	Duty		Managerial	Comm	Promotion		
Strategy	Performance	Leadership	Skills	Skills	Judgment	Potential	Lambda
Combination							0.939
Agree	5.35	5.26*	5.08	5.35*	5.04	5.31*	
Disagree	5.19	4.81	4.83	4.98	4.67	4.95	
Consistency							0.877
Agree	5.27*	5.25	5.41	5.22	5.15*	5.38*	
Disagree	4.82	4.95	4.89	5.08	4.66	4.67	
Reciprocity							0.928
Agree	5.18	5.03	4.94	5.5*	5.05*	5.37*	
Disagree	5	4.84	4.72	5.18	4.61	4.97	
Mindless							0.941
Agree	5.05	5.16	4.84	5.23	5.19	5.28	
Disagree	4.99	4.9	4.71	4.86	4.78	5.01	
Control							0.945
Agree	5.12	5.06	4.79	5.3	5	5.21	
Disagree	5.29	5.21	5	5.17	4.86	5.16	

* $p < .05$

Impact of Experience on Agreement

The effect of influence strategies on compliance was not a function of experience. Agreement was not affected by years of ROTC experience, $F(4,114) = .528$, $p = .716$, or prior enlistment time, $F(1,117) = .436$, $p = .510$.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

Summary of Findings

The results of this study suggest that consistency and reciprocity, either used alone or in concert, are effective approaches for influencing supervisory compliance. Both of these influence strategies were significantly more effective in producing supervisory compliance than controls. When attempting to influence supervisors' decisions, subordinates were more successful if they provided a consistency argument in support of their recommendation or offered a reward or benefit in exchange for compliance with their recommendation than if they only offered a recommendation. Indeed, recommendations *without* strategies were relatively ineffective for producing compliance. Moreover, mindless approaches were equally ineffective, suggesting that success of the other approaches was *not* the result of "mindless behavior" on part of the supervisor.

Alternate Explanations

Although these results are compelling, it is important to remember that the outcome of any particular influence attempt is determined by many factors besides influence strategies. Individual factors such as gender, the perceived power of the agent or experience of the target may have contributed to the success of these tactics. In

particular, the agent's access to the target may have mediated the influence of these strategies. Barry and Bateman (1992) contend that "in upward communication, access rather than strategy may be the fulcrum upon which long-term social influence turns" (p.569). Their study investigated the relationship between communication media and success of upward influence tactics. After surveying managers on influence attempts, they found that richer media (phone contact, face-to-face interaction) were more associated with successful influence attempts than more formal media (letters, or memo). In the present study, the supervisors were exposed to influence attempts during simulated "face-to-face" interactions. They may have felt a stronger obligation to comply with the subordinate in this setting. Moreover, this type of access is usually reserved for high level employees. In this study, subordinates were depicted as key members of the command staff, supervising large sections of the organization. Therefore position may have added to the potency of the tactics. However, if it was just position or access alone influencing compliance, one would expect the same level of compliance with control conditions. Clearly, this was not the case.

There is evidence to suggest that organizational status (agent's power and/or level of request legitimacy) influences the choice of influence tactic (Hirokawa et al, 1990, 1991). This study also implies that position may be a mediating factor in the success of an influence attempt; research needs to explore this contention. Future studies should address how choice of strategy and status may be confounded in naturalistic settings.

Although not directly studied in this experiment, gender of the influence agent may have contributed to the results. Scenario 1, which included a female influence agent

(subordinate), facilitated the lowest overall compliance. Although Scenario 5 included a female influence agent (subordinate) which resulted in high levels of compliance, the focus of Scenario 1's problem was also a female. Moreover, the problem discussed was the female member's inability to pass weight standards. Societal pressures may have led participants to consider a female's failure to maintain weight standards as extremely severe. Indeed, although judges rated the subordinate's recommendation as appropriate and feasible, participants felt the recommendation was too lenient and usually, selected another option. A ceiling effect may have resulted in which no matter how many approaches were used, influence would not have occurred. This suggests that any tactic can be susceptible to resistance if the request is not legitimate or appropriate according to the target. Future research may consider the relationship between influence strategy and the appropriateness of the request. Although it is doubtful that these tactics could facilitate compliance on an inadequate recommendation, they may be strong enough to promote a mediocre request.

Other situational factors such as timing, or type of decision may have also influenced current findings. For example, an influence strategy's success rate may be related to how early in the decision making process a strategy is employed. In this case, subordinates were allowed to make inputs before the supervisor had arrived at his or her decision. It would be interesting to explore whether these same strategies are effective after the supervisor has committed to a decision. Specifically, are they powerful enough to change a supervisor's decision? In addition, one could argue that the success enjoyed by these strategies was in part due to the decision task. These tactics may only work for

recommendations on personnel-type problems or on problems that require disciplinary action. Consistent punishment, for example, may be particularly important to maintaining discipline in a military unit. Yet scenarios differed with respect to the kind of problem (weight problem vs. drinking vs. arriving to work late etc.) and the characteristics of the individual involved (gender and ranks varied across each scenario). Despite these differences, strategies were equally successful across four of the five scenarios.

Limitations

There are three primary problems with this study. First, participants were exposed to influence attempts through written incidents. Although a written paradigm has been used successfully by other researchers (Wood & Mitchell, 1981; Hirokawa et al, 1991; Barry & Shapiro, 1992), there is no way to ascertain whether participants really felt like 'supervisors' or if they would really act as they responded. Moreover, the results regarding performance ratings should be viewed with caution. The written format provided supervisors with only limited interaction and information from which to base ratings. However, participants' ratings did not differ from those of Air Force experts, even though these experts were not exposed to influence conditions. This suggests that participants and experts were using similar information to form conclusions. These conclusions do not appear to be affected by influence techniques. Moreover, in large organizations, supervisors frequently have to make decisions regarding evaluations with limited information. Finally, as computer-based communication such as electronic mail becomes the norm, it is very likely that subordinates will make requests or pitch proposals

through a written format. Therefore, studies involving written influence attempts may be seen as more realistic.

Still since this study involved written face-to face interactions, a role-playing paradigm would have provided a more naturalistic setting and a better foundation from which to draw conclusions. Future research should expose participants to influence strategies under role-playing conditions, allowing researchers to observe the influence process in action. Researchers might also investigate these tactics with computer-based communication.

Second, this study did not use actual supervisors, but instead relied on ROTC cadets. Experienced superiors may have acted differently. Unlike experienced Air Force managers, these young, inexperienced ROTC cadets may have been particularly susceptible to these strategies. However if that were true, one would expect agreement with a particular strategy to decrease as a function of experience. This was not the case. Cadets with two years experience were just as likely to comply with a strategy as those with three and four years of experience. In addition, the ten cadets with prior enlistment time in the active duty Air Force, were just as likely to comply as their less experienced counterparts. Moreover, as previously mentioned, participants' decisions on performance evaluations were similar to those of experienced Air Force supervisors.

Finally, there are potential limits to the generalizability of these findings to other organizations outside of the military. Certainly, the personal nature of the some of the personnel problems (off-duty alcohol incident) discussed here are more indicative of military organizations. The present findings may be due to the fact that the military places

more value on consistency and reciprocity than non-military organizations. However, the military operates under a strict hierarchical structure which is usually less receptive to input from lower levels. If these strategies worked under such a strict chain of command, one could predict that they would be successful in other organizations.

Contributions to Existing Research on Social Influence

Social Psychology

The present study also contributes to general research on social influence. First, these results suggest that consistency can still be a powerful motivator of human behavior. Although there are several reasons why consistency has not been investigated in last few years, one of the primary concerns is the fact that more recent research has failed to replicate the results of early studies (Cialdini, 1995). Why, then does this particular study demonstrate traditional consistency effects? The answer to this question identifies some pertinent conditions that may be required before consistency effects occur.

The present study's ability to replicate traditional consistency effects may stem from the fact that this study tested public consistency, defined as a desire to appear consistent to others (Cialdini, 1995). Public consistency may be particularly desirable in an organizational domain. In this study, the decision to be consistent or not was made in front of a key subordinate. In attempt to look consistent in front of a subordinate, the supervisor may have agreed with recommendations that under other circumstances would have led to disagreement. This same effect may have not occurred if the paradigm

investigated internal consistency. Indeed, leaders and managers may be particularly vulnerable to public consistency approaches, especially if consistency is valued in the organization. Previous studies' failure to replicate traditional findings may be due to the fact that research has primarily been done on the compliant behavior of consumers. In these settings, the desire to appear publicly committed to previous attitudes or behavior may not be as great. Future studies might investigate whether the present findings generalize to other hierarchical relationships that value public consistency such as coach-player or teacher-student associations.

The strong consistency effects may also be due to the target's heightened awareness of consistency motives. In this experiment, the subordinate directly (intentionally) addressed consistency as a motive for supervisory compliance. The subordinate specifically told the supervisor that agreement with subordinate would result in consistent behavior on the part of the supervisor. Previous research has shown that this act of confronting can lead to more consistent behavior. Stone et al. (1994) were able to induce undergraduates to use condoms only after showing them the hypocrisy between their advocacy of safe sex and their failures to use condoms. According to Cialdini et al. (1992), in order for consistency strategies to work, researchers must amplify consistency motives by making them more salient. Participants must be directly confronted with discrepancies between their current behavior and past behavior. Clearly, the present study adds weight to the argument that consistency can motivate behavior, but only if the potential for inconsistency is made extremely salient.

Finally, this study may have enlisted participants whom have a dispositional preference for consistency. Cialdini et al. (1995) has found evidence to support a preference for consistency personality trait and developed the Preference for Consistency Scale (PFC) as a valid method for measuring it. Military members may have a greater preference for consistency than their civilian counterparts.

The second major contribution this study brings to social psychology is the fact that consistency and reciprocity facilitated compliant behavior in an environment not traditionally studied by persuasion researchers. The present study suggests that previous consistency and reciprocity findings can generalize to an organizational environment.

For the most part, social psychology has studied consistency as a potential influence strategy for compliance in consumer settings or to alter the behavior of a peer. Several experiments have been designed in which telemarketers or sales personnel use one of these approaches on a consumer. Other studies have demonstrated the power of these strategies to influence the behavior of unfamiliar undergraduates or unsuspecting strangers. In these settings, consistency and reciprocity were relatively successful. Yet, these relationship are unfamiliar, peer to peer interactions in which the target holds relatively little power over the agent. They are distinctly different from that of the supervisor-subordinate relationship. Despite this fact, the present findings support consistency and reciprocity as effective methods for facilitating supervisory compliance in organizations. Future research should investigate the effect of other traditional persuasion strategies in this setting.

Upward Influence Behavior In Organizations

The present research also makes a solid contribution to the existing literature on upward influence behavior in organizations. The present findings add three primary insights: First, this study demonstrates that influence strategies, broadly studied in social psychology, can generalize to an organizational environment. The present research identifies consistency and reciprocity as effective subordinate influence tactics. It also identifies the need for organizational researchers to go beyond traditional typologies of organizational influence behavior and study the potential of other tactics from other literature. It is important to make subordinates aware of all types of influence strategies not just the success rates of the ones in current use. In the high-risk environment of upward influence, the more weapons, the better.

Second, this study contributes to the limited research on the effect of upward influence strategies on compliance. The present study has shown that the use of reciprocity and consistency approaches facilitates supervisory compliance.

Many organizational researchers contend that an exchange approach is the most effective method of upward influence. Experts contend that the "way influence is acquired without formal authority is through the law of reciprocity" in which influence seeker offer critical currencies in exchange for compliance. However, empirical research on this approach has been unclear and inconsistent. Previous research has associated the exchange/reciprocity approach with both positive (Schilit & Locke, 1982; Yukl & Falbe, 1992) and negative outcomes (Case et al., 1988). This study helps to resolve some of

these inconsistencies. It supports the work of Falbe and Yukl (1992), which demonstrated that at least in terms of compliance, exchange can be an effective upward influence tactic.

Some researchers may contend that consistency has been studied in this environment under the organizational literature strategy of rational persuasion. They may consider a consistency argument fits the definition of the rational tactic (use of logical arguments to persuade a target that a request is worthwhile). Yet, even if consistency is considered a form of rational persuasion, these findings significantly add to the limited research on the effect of rational persuasion on supervisory compliance. Prior to this research, only one other study explored the impact of rational persuasion on immediate supervisory compliance (Falbe and Yukl, 1992). Other studies have only examined correlation's of rational persuasion with long-term work-related factors such as performance evaluations, and promotability.

It is important to note that these strategies were effective for inducing compliance to a recommendation in the face of a competing recommendation. Previous research had only examined tactics in an isolated setting. Here, the judge advocate's recommendation directly opposed that of the subordinate. Participants/supervisors were forced to decide between the two recommendations. Even though the judge advocate was not a subordinate of the supervisor, he or she was depicted as the expert regarding Air Force disciplinary matters. Despite this fact, when subordinates utilized influence tactics, supervisors were more likely to comply with their recommendations than the judge advocate's recommendation.

This study also examined the effect of a combination of tactics, which is more likely to occur in a natural setting, on supervisory compliance. Prior to this research only two studies had examined the presence of a combination of tactics in compliance-gaining situations.

It is interesting to note that the combination approach did not produce more compliance than either approach used alone. Intuitively, one might predict that any combination of tactics would be more effective than a single tactic, maintaining that "two is better than one". However, consistency resulted in the highest rate of compliance (over 68 percent) and was significantly more effective than the reciprocity approach. In this case, the addition of reciprocity did not increase the power of the consistency approach. These results may be due to a ceiling effect, particularly in cases where participants thought the recommendation was inappropriate. It may be the case that a percentage of participants will never be influenced no matter how many strategies are used.

The results regarding combination of tactics support the work of Barry and Shapiro (1992) which found that when an ingratiating approach was paired with an offered exchange, compliance was significantly lower than when ingratiation was used alone. It may be that reciprocity is only effective as a single tactic. Although Yukl and Fable (1992) found exchange to be effective tactic in producing supervisory compliance, it's effectiveness in a combination may depend on its pairing. Indeed, Falbe and Yukl (1992) found that "although combinations were usually more effective than single tactics, a combination of two hard tactics was no better than a single hard tactic, and a soft-hard combination was no better than a single soft tactic". Consistent with other research, the

present findings suggest that not all combinations are effective. It appears that influence tactics used in combination are not independent or merely additive and that ceiling effects may occur. Indeed, subordinates must also consider what the effect of any one tactic will be in the presence, or absence of other tactics before utilizing a combination approach. Future research should explore the potential of tactical combinations and attempt to distinguish which tactics work well together, which are more effective by themselves, and under what circumstances.

These results differ from that of Howard's (1995) work on combining the use of reciprocation and commitment/consistency techniques for facilitating purchase behavior. He found that a combination approach was much more effective and required less effort than single tactics used alone. Results showed a combination of consistency and reciprocity reduced the work load and brought greater sales. The fact that the present research does not mirror Howard's study suggests that context must be considered before utilizing multiple tactics. Combinations that facilitate compliance in consumer settings may not facilitate compliance in organizational settings. However, in both studies, use of single tactics were significantly more effective than requests without the addition of tactics.

Finally, and most importantly, the present study contributes to our knowledge of the effect of these strategies on individual job-related outcomes. In general, an agent's use of consistency or reciprocity as an influence method did not affect the agent's performance ratings. This is important because subordinates will only use these approaches if they do

not fear retaliation from their supervisors. Influence seekers must be wary of strategies that are successful in the short-term but include long-term consequences.

Although use of a strategy had no effect on ratings, there is evidence to suggest agreement with a particular recommendation may impact evaluations. On several performance items, participant's gave significantly higher ratings to those subordinates that they agreed with than those that they disagreed with. Agreement or opinion conformity may increase the supervisor's perception of similarity between the supervisor and subordinate. Indeed, there are several studies that have found a relationship between perceived similarity and performance appraisals. Often those subordinates viewed as similar receive higher ratings from their supervisor (Pulakos & Wexley, 1983). Moreover perceived similarity may increase liking, which has been positively associated with ratings (Tsui & Barry, 1986; Wayne & Ferris, 1990).

Implications

The present findings have important implications for subordinates. For upward influence agents who do not have authority or extensive power, consistency and reciprocity appear to effective strategies for inducing compliance, even in the face of competing recommendations. Subordinates can be reasonably confident that the use of consistency or reciprocity does not result in negative consequences. Facilitating supervisory agreement may in fact produce positive long-term outcomes such as higher performance ratings.

In socially complex organizations where subordinates depend on superiors whom they have little control over, these two approaches may help bridge the power gap. Subordinates may be able to get things done in situations where their responsibility exceeds their formal authority. If subordinates feel they can actively influence their superiors without fear of retaliation, they may participate more in decision making which benefits both the employee and the employer. Providing subordinates with effective methods of influence is critical not only to personal success (more resources, higher ratings) but to the success of the organization as well (mission accomplishment, increased production).

APPENDIX A

INTRODUCTORY SECTION

LEADERSHIP DECISION MAKING

STUDY

Thank you for participating in our study on Leadership Decision Making. As a participant, we would like you to solve problems and make decisions from a commander's perspective. In the role of an Air Force Squadron Commander, we will ask you to review material regarding operational and personnel problems in your unit and decide upon the proper course of action. You will be given 5 scenarios. Each scenario contains background information regarding the problems, and recommendations from key personnel on how to solve these problems. Please read this material carefully. After review, please answer the questions that follow each scenario. After reading all five scenarios, we will ask you to evaluate your key subordinates.

Please read all information in the assigned order and answer all questions in the order in which they are encountered.

After you have completed the survey, we will ask for your comments and/or suggestions. As you read the material and answer the questions, please keep in mind any ideas/recommendations that might help improve this survey. Thanks again for participating!

ASSIGNMENT

Background: You are a Lt Col with 15 years of experience in the Air Force. You are a KC-135 pilot with Wing and MAJCOM experience but this is your first command. You have just been assigned as the Commander of the 25th Communications Squadron.

Unit Mission: The 25th Communications Squadron (25 CS) provides operations and maintenance of vital command, control, communications and computer systems that support the worldwide mission of the 25th Wing and 43 associate units. It also provides navigational aids and visual information services to the Wing and it's attached units. The 25 CS is comprised of over 400 personnel separated into five flights.

As part of your role as Commander, you will be required to make various personnel and operational decisions. Although you will receive advice from outside sources, the decision ultimately rests with you.

Today's Schedule:

- 1) Review Wing CC policy letter on appropriate disciplinary action
- 2) Meet with your five flight commanders to review each flight's current status
- 3) Prepare for tomorrow's Wing Quality Force Meeting: Your Wing Commander holds a monthly Quality Force Meeting attended by all Squadron and Group Commanders, Chief of Personnel and the Staff Judge Advocate. At each meeting, he inquires on the progress of those personnel with Unfavorable Information Files (UIFs), control rosters, weight problems, Article 15s and court martials.

APPENDIX B

EXAMPLE OF THE FLIGHT COMMANDER MEETING SECTION

INFORMATION SYSTEMS FLIGHT

Flight Commander: Capt Tim C. Howard

Job Description: Capt Howard commands the information systems flight comprised of 52 military and 3 civilian personnel. He is in charge of providing essential communications and information systems services including Theater Battle Management systems, communications and computer security, long-haul comm, postal service and records management. He manages all automated Data Processing Equipment, including new computer purchases and disposal of old items. He performs long-range planning and development to optimize utilization and performance of personnel and equipment.

Job Performance: According to your predecessor, Capt Howard has been a competent performer for the squadron. He has over 6 years of experience in the communications career field and has been in the squadron for over two years. During that time, he led a quality improvement team (QIT) that successfully coordinated the transfer of computer equipment valued at over \$17.5 million. His leadership was pivotal to the successful and safe removal and disposal of over 2 tons of hazardous waste computer equipment. However, his new procedures to distribute records management publications have not improved the flight's on-time delivery rate which is at an all time low. In addition, his self-help installation of a new Base Network Switchboard System is over-budget by more than \$25,000.

Capt Howard has just entered your office to discuss his flight's current status.

MEETING

Capt Howard: Good Morning Colonel, Welcome to the 25th!

Commander: Thanks, Come on in. I wanted to see you this morning so we could sit down and talk about your flight. I've reviewed your flight goals, mission statement, and operating procedures so I have a pretty good idea what you guys do. But I wanted to give you a chance to personally discuss any relevant issues and concerns with me. Lets begin by discussing any personnel problems your flight may have?

Capt Howard: Well, one of my troops, A1C Smith used his government credit card to purchase over \$300's worth of clothing at the Gap. I guess we need to decide what to do with him before the Wing Commander's Quality Force meeting tomorrow.

Commander: Has he had any previous instances of misconduct or irresponsible behavior?

Capt Howard: Yes. Last week, he showed up to work an hour late. His supervisor gave him a Verbal Reprimand. It's been documented on a Memo For Record.

Commander: What about his job performance?

Capt Howard: Well, he is really just an average performer....has been slow with training. Tends to socialize too much on the job. He is very popular with the junior enlisted and I get the impression the Wing Commander likes him quite a bit. He is the star of the Wing Basketball Team

Commander: Any extenuating circumstances? Personal problems?

Capt Howard: No, not really

Commander: Have you discussed the problem with legal?

Capt Howard: Yes, I talked to them this morning. They recommend Article 15 action with a suspended bust and financial forfeitures.....An Unfavorable Information File (UIF) which is of course mandatory with an Article 15. They also recommend placing Smith on a Control Roster.

Commander: Do you agree?

Capt Howard: No, I suggest an Letter of Reprimand with a UIF. I would also place him on a Control Roster.

Commander: Why?

Capt Howard: First of all, this what the squadron has done in the past in similar offenses. In fact, the old commander administered the same punishment to an airman who had the same background as Smith just a few months ago. I think it's important that we, as a command staff, remain consistent regarding disciplinary action. And second, can I be frank?

Commander: Please do.

Capt Howard: He is very popular in the flight, especially with the junior enlisted. I think if you give him another chance, my flight will think of you as an ally, someone on their side...a commander for the little guy so to speak...If Smith stays, they'll double their efforts, work extra hours during the upcoming Runway Closure Deployment. They will do whatever it takes to make that project a success.

Commander: Ok Thanks Tim, I'll take your recommendation under consideration. Before I let you go, any operational problems I need to be made aware of?

Capt Howard: Yes. My people were delivering some new computers to the Civil Engineering (CE) Squadron last week and they noticed that CE had rigged a 'mini-squadron' area network. Not only is this against regulations, but it also increases the potential for damage to the computers, especially the risk of a virus contaminating the hard drives. I called their flight commander about it last week but he hasn't gotten back to confirm that they have discontinued the practice. I could call him back or send some guys over there to check it out. CE is not scheduled for wide area network installation for another two months. Sir, how should I proceed?

**PERSONNEL PROBLEM:
Commander's Options**

As the Commander of the 25th Communications Squadron, what would you do about A1C Smith?

Please choose from the following options (Circle your answer). You are encouraged to review all pertinent information prior to responding:

- 1) Article 15 which includes forfeitures and suspended bust, Unfavorable Information File (UIF), and Control Roster
- 2) Article 15 with forfeitures and a Suspended Bust, a UIF
- 3) Letter of Reprimand, UIF, and a Control Roster
- 4) Letter of Reprimand and a UIF
- 5) Letter of Reprimand only
- 6) No action

Please explain your answer:

Which information did you find most pertinent?

Using the following scale, indicate how certain you are that you made the correct decision?

Very Uncertain

Very Certain

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9

Using the following scale, indicate how serious you think the member's infraction was?

Not Very Serious

Very Serious

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9

Using the following scale, indicate how severe you think the Judge Advocate's punishment recommendation?

Not Very Severe

Very Severe

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9

Using the following scale, indicate how severe you think the Flight Commander's punishment recommendation?

Not Very Severe

Very Severe

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9

Using the following scale, indicate how severe you think your recommendation.

Not Very Severe

Very Severe

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9

OPERATIONAL PROBLEM
Commander's Options

As the Commander of the 25th Communications Squadron, what would you do about the 'mini-squadron' net in the Civil Engineering (CE) Squadron?

Please choose from the following options (Circle your answer). You are encouraged to review all pertinent information prior to responding:

- 1) Contact the CE Commander yourself and ask him to ensure the practice is discontinued
- 2) Have Capt Howard send a team over there to inspect the area. If it is still in place, contact the CE Commander yourself
- 3) Have Capt Howard contact the CE Flight Commander again. And if he doesn't get a response, contact CE Commander yourself
- 4) Reschedule the CE Squadron's wide area network installation for next month (which would bump another squadron to CE's date (two months from now))
- 5) Contact the CE Squadron and ask him to discontinue practice. If he does, tell him you will reschedule the CE Squadron's wide area network installation for next month (which would bump another squadron to CE's date (two months from now))

Please explain your answer:

Which information did you find most pertinent to your decision?

Using the following scale, indicate how certain you are that you made an appropriate decision?

Very Uncertain

Very Certain

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9

APPENDIX C

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION FORM

PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONNAME: Scott J. GaleSOCIAL: 446-72-9567GRADE: CaptRATINGS: (please circle your selection)1. Duty Performance (Consider quality, quantity, and timeliness of duties performed)

Poor

Average

Outstanding

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

2. Leadership (Consider whether ratee motivates peers or subordinates, maintains discipline, sets and enforces standards, evaluates subordinates fairly and consistently, plans and organizes work)

Poor

Average

Outstanding

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

3. Managerial Skills (Consider how well member uses time and resources)

Poor

Average

Outstanding

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

4. **Communication Skills** (Consider ratee's ability to organize and express ideas)

Poor

Average

Outstanding

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

5. Judgment

Poor

Average

Outstanding

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

6. Potential for Promotion

Poor

Average

Outstanding

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

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DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
Completion of Master's Thesis
and/or Degree

Full Name of Student HELEN MARIE MEISENHOLDER

Social Security Number [REDACTED]

Master of SCIENCE Area SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY
(Arts or Science)

Month and Year you plan to receive the degree JUNE 1997
(fall - December; winter - March; spring - June; summer - September)

The student is seeking the degree: _____ without a thesis.
X with a thesis entitled: _____

UPWARD INFLUENCE STRATEGIES: THE EFFECT OF
CONSISTENCY AND RECIPROCITY APPROACHES ON
SUPERVISORY COMPLIANCE AND PERFORMANCE
EVALUATIONS

Committee Members (please print):

*Signatures:

Robert MAURO
MAURON ROYBONET
Sara D. Hodges

[Signature]
[Signature]
Sara D. Hodges

*Committee members please note: your signature signifies approval of a master's thesis, and/or awarding of the degree.

Please list all incompletes and coursework you are doing this term that will be used toward the degree:

Term	Course Number and Title	Credits	Grade Option
WINTER	PSY 503: THESIS	2	-
SPRING	PSY 503: THESIS	9	-